

# Sam says Xia' remarks about Xi's speeches in Macau provide 'crucial guidance'



Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai (front, second from right), Central People's Government Liaison Office in Macau Director Zheng Xincong (front, second from left), Foreign Ministry Commissioner Liu Xianfa (front, right) and Macau Legislative Assembly (AL) President Kou Hoi In (front, left) as well as other guests attend yesterday's parallel session set up in Macau listening remotely by video link to the speech by Xia Baolong at yesterday's seminar in Beijing. — Photo: GCS

## Staff Reporter

Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai said that Director Xia Baolong's speech at a seminar in Beijing yesterday comprehensively, deeply, and systematically elucidated the profound connotations and significance of President Xi Jinping's series of important speeches during his inspection visit to Macau last month, providing "crucial guidance" for the Macau Special Administrative

Region (MSAR) Government's advancement of various undertakings, according to a statement released by the Macau Government Information Bureau (GCS).

The National Association of Hong Kong and Macau Studies (NAHKMS) held yesterday a seminar in Beijing on studying and implementing the spirit of President Xi's important speeches made at the celebration of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

of Macau's return to the motherland and the inauguration ceremony of the sixth-term MSAR government.

Sam attended a parallel session set up in Macau, to listen remotely, by video link, to the speech delivered by the Director of the Hong Kong and Macau Work Office (HKMWO) of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and Director of the State Council's Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office (HKMAO),

Xia Baolong, at the seminar.

Sam said, according to the GCS statement, that President Xi's visit to Macau from 18 to 20 December 2024 had provided a high-level perspective that clearly indicated the direction for Macau's future development and also demonstrated high hopes for the MSAR. President Xi's concern and care for Macau, his foresight on strategic planning for the great cause of the "One Country,



Two Systems" principle, his detailed deployments regarding the development of various undertakings in the MSAR, and the insightfulness of his expectations for the new-term MSAR government, all served as tremendous encouragement and inspiration.

Studying and understanding the raft of important speeches by President Xi has been at present – and continues to be – of foremost importance for the MSAR, Sam was quoted as saying. The MSAR government and various sectors of civil society have been holding seminars and briefing sessions to study and understand the spirit of President Xi's important speeches, Sam underlined.

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## São Tomean president rejects ruling party's prime minister nomination

SÃO TOME – São Tomé and Príncipe's ruling Independent Democratic Action Party (ADI) yesterday proposed three new candidates for the position of prime minister, following President Carlos Vila Nova's rejection of the earlier nominee, Hélio de Almeida.

According to updates on ADI's official Facebook page and national news agency STP-Press, all three nominees are women, namely President of the National

Assembly Celmira Sacramento, Minister of Justice Ilza Amado Vaz, and Minister of Health Ângela Costa.

Earlier in the day, Vila Nova rejected the nomination of Hélio de Almeida as prime minister proposed by ADI, calling on ADI to come up with alternative candidates to replace Patrice Trovoada, who was dismissed earlier this week.

According to STP-Press, the

rejection was announced during a press conference where the president explained that Hélio de Almeida's candidacy did not align with his "sensibility."

"After consultations and within the scope of my responsibilities, the candidate proposed by ADI, Hélio de Almeida, does not meet my sensibility. Therefore, I request that ADI propose other names for the leadership of the next government in the coming hours,

as the party has other qualified cadres," said Vila Nova. "The requirements are mainly those that align with a specific profile. Of course, I cannot go into details here because the party is well aware of them."

The São Tomean president on Monday dissolved Trovoada's government and requested his party propose a new candidate for the position of prime minister and head of government within 72 hours.

Trovoada held a press conference on Tuesday at his office, describing the president's decision as unconstitutional. ADI, with which both Vila Nova and Trovoada are members, has appealed to the Constitutional Court to overturn the decision.

Trovoada signed a letter as ADI chairman on Wednesday, nominating Hélio de Almeida as the new prime minister.

— Xinhua

### Xi chairs CPC leadership meeting to hear work reports of state institutions

The Communist Party of China (CPC) leadership met yesterday to hear a series of work reports from the leading Party members' groups of state institutions, including the top legislature, central government, top political advisory body, top court and top procuratorate.

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### Musk draws ire because 'isn't left-wing': Italy's Meloni

Italy's far-right prime minister, Giorgia Meloni, said yesterday that Elon Musk's political interventions only caused outrage because he wasn't left-wing – and that foreigners had been interfering in Italian politics for years.

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### Clashes as crowds welcome Mozambique opposition leader home from exile

Mozambique's main opposition leader returned from weeks of exile yesterday, insisting he won October's presidential elections and welcomed by thousands of jubilant supporters but at least one person was killed as police tried to disperse the crowds.

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# Students have 'stereotypical impression' of Hengqin's development: survey

Yuki Lei

Tertiary education students have a lack of understanding of the policies about the Guangdong-Macau In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, with a "stereotypical impression", according to the findings of a recent survey, which points out that over half of the respondents, however, expressed their willingness to develop their careers there.

The survey was conducted in Chinese between August and November by the Macau Jiangmen Youths Association (MJMY), in conjunction with the Macau Social Security Society, aiming to find out the students' level of knowledge of Hengqin, its industrial development policies and measures, as well as willingness to develop their careers there.

A total of 524 valid questionnaires were collected during the survey, whose findings were released yesterday. The findings also include the outcome of interviews with a government official, a former member of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC),

an academic, a community leader, and a former member of the Legislative Assembly (AL).

The respondents' ages ranged from 18 to 45, 383 of them local residents. Well over 90 percent of them had visited Hengqin, mainly for entertainment or visiting friends and relatives.

According to the findings, more than half of the respondents' understanding of the in-depth cooperation zone is limited to subjects such as accommodation, transportation, culture and tourism, yet only 35 percent indicated that they were aware of the policies and measures and the local government's plan to develop four key industries on the adjacent island – sci-tech research and high-end manufacturing; big health; and cultural tourism, conventions and exhibitions, and modern finance.

The findings show, a statement released along with the survey results said, "a lack of understanding of the policies" vis-à-vis Hengqin among the respondents, as well as their "stereotypical impression" of Hengqin's development, such



This file photo taken on November 26 last year shows the entrance to the Guangdong-Macau In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin. – Photo: Xinhua

as Hengqin still lacking resources and its industries not yet being well developed.

However, the statement did not reveal how many of the respondents have a "stereotypical impression" of Hengqin.

The survey cited the measures implemented by the local government in Hengqin, such as vocational training and education targeting the four key industries in Hengqin, as well as internship

programmes for local youths in Hengqin. Among the measures listed, while the majority of the respondents (235) indicated that they knew about the development direction of the four key industries in Hengqin, only 132 respondents indicated that they were aware of the vocational training and education available for Macau residents there.

The findings noted that 447 respondents, or 85.3 percent, have expressed their intention

to join internships and exchange programmes in Hengqin, mostly involving the modern finance industry, with 293 respondents, or 65.5 percent, followed by the segment comprising cultural tourism, conventions and exhibitions, with 289 respondents, or 64.6 percent. In terms of the career development in Hengqin, 368 respondents, or 70.2 percent, indicated their desire to work there, with half of them saying that they were willing to start their own business there.

The findings point out that the factors affecting the respondents' development expectations in Hengqin include the level of residential property prices, salaries and economic prospects, as well as the price factor in general.

The findings quoted the five "elite" respondents as saying that local tertiary education students should take advantage of the availability of internships to learn more about Hengqin enterprises, while also urging the government to promote the training of talents and strengthen cooperation with industry, academia and research institutes. ■

## Winter shelter in Ilha Verde opens

Ginnie Liang

In view of the Yellow cold weather alert issued by the local observatory yesterday, the Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) has opened its winter shelter in the E1 Bairro da Ilha Verde Building at 34 Rua Leste da Ilha Verde, staying open until the mercury rises again, according to an IAS statement yesterday.

Blankets, food and drinks will be provided for those seeking shelter from the cold, the statement added. The shelter opened yesterday.

The bureau urged members of the public to pay close attention to the health conditions of senior citizens, of those living alone and

all those who suffer from chronic diseases or are in frail health, and to take appropriate precautions against the cold weather.

Enquiries can be made by calling 2827 0939 during office hours or 6399 1963 during non-office hours.

The observatory predicted that the Yellow cold weather warning, which was issued yesterday, will remain in force at least over the weekend. The weather station said that the mercury was expected to drop to 11°C today, and even 9°C or below on Saturday and Sunday.

Yellow is the lowest of Macau's two-level cold warning system, Orange being the highest. ■



This undated file photo taken from Caritas Macau's website yesterday shows the building where the city's winter shelter in Ilha Verde district is located, E1 Bairro da Ilha Verde Building at 34 Rua Leste da Ilha Verde.

## GSE Asia & Asian IR Expo slated for May, to focus on non-gaming attractions



The organisers of the Global Gaming Expo Asia (G2E Asia) and the Asian IR Expo hold a press conference at the Macau International Golf club in Coloane yesterday.



Vera Ng (吳麗芬), project director of Reed Exhibitions, briefs the press conference about the details of the two concurrent events scheduled for May. – Photos: Yuki Lei

Yuki Lei

The Global Gaming Expo Asia (G2E Asia) and Asian IR Expo will once again be held concurrently at The Venetian Macao, this time from May 7-9, with a 50-percent growth in event space from last year, mostly due to increased demand by the Asian IR Expo – and Vera Ng (吳麗芬), project director of Reed Exhibitions, clarified yesterday that "we are not moving away from gaming", but rather expanding to include non-gaming attractions, in line with the local government's direction of market development.

It is the second time that G2E Asia will be held locally after the COVID-19 pandemic.

The event is organised by Reed Exhibitions in conjunction with the American Gaming Association (AGA).

On the sidelines of a press conference at the Macau International Golf Club in Coloane yesterday, Ng said she expected the

number of visitors to the three-day event to reach about 6,000, similar to the number recorded last year, with the increase in the number of exhibitiongoers expected to be mainly driven by the Asian IR Expo.

According to the press conference, the event is expected to cover a total area of 30,000 square metres, with over 150 exhibitors and more than 10,000 industry professionals participating in the event and a raft of side activities, including personalised one-on-one business meetings, "high-impact" networking events, and two concurrent educational programmes.

Among them, the press conference noted, on top of "the success of the past two editions" and in response to "strong demand", the third edition of the Asian IR Expo will have its focus expanded to cover sectors such as IR Technology & Solutions, Live Entertainment Equipment & Technology, Sports & Entertainment, Green Hotel Supplies, and IR Travel

Suppliers & Operators.

The press conference also pointed out the highlights of the upcoming event's casino conference, which will include in-depth market analyses of emerging markets and the outlook for Asian gaming markets, as well as strategies around technology and innovations for the gaming industry. Speaking to the media, Ng said that the gaming segment of the event "is actually growing", with new technology solutions and integrated systems being showcased.

Meanwhile, the Asian IR Summit has been scheduled to take place from May 6-8 at the Galaxy International Convention Centre, featuring "insightful" conference sessions on the opportunities and challenges of bringing non-gaming components to integrated resorts (IRs) in Asia, future technology impacting the IR and hospitality industry, and sports and entertainment, according to the press conference. ■

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### Macau Weather

TEMPERATURE FALLING SLIGHTLY. COLD AND DRY. MAINLY FINE. FORCE 4 TO 5 NORTHERLY WINDS, OCCASIONALLY FORCE 6 WITH GUSTS. RELATIVE HUMIDITY WILL RANGE BETWEEN 35% AND 55%.



11°C~17°C

Source: SMG

## Waiting time for emergency department maybe longer than usual: public hospital

Ginnie Liang

The director of the emergency department of the public Conde de São Januário Hospital Centre, Chang Tam Fei, said yesterday that the average waiting time in the public hospital's emergency department is currently around two hours, although it may be even longer during the recent flu peak period, according to local media reports yesterday.

Chang said that as Macau enters its peak flu season, the bureau is addressing the increasing number of respiratory illness cases by allocating additional manpower and medical resources to maintain reasonable waiting times in emergency departments, adding that residents can utilise medical resources in the community (such as health centre) for mild respiratory symptoms to avoid straining the emergency service at the public hospital, local media reported.

The bureau has identified two severe flu cases recently, one involving a 38-year-old patient with no chronic conditions who developed pneumonia after contracting the flu virus, and another with a more complex infection of a 57-year-old man. Both patients have required intensive care and were not vaccinated against the seasonal flu.

Health Bureau official Chan Choi Van noted that last week the bureau reported a flu positivity rate of 26.2 percent, indicating a notable increase from previous weeks, highlighting the flu virus's

growing presence in the city, local media reported.

Chan also told reporters yesterday that flu remains the primary threat among acute respiratory infections, with the virus's transmission rate on the rise, according to a local media report.

As the holiday season approaches, Chan said, increased social gatherings and travel are expected to elevate the risk of flu infections, adding that vulnerable populations, including the elderly, pregnant women, young children, and those with chronic illnesses, should get vaccinated promptly, as the vaccination takes at least two weeks to develop sufficient immunity, local media reported.

In addition, the bureau reported a critical flu case yesterday, in which an 86-year-old male resident of a nursing home, suffering from multiple chronic diseases, exhibited worsening symptoms after initially being treated for a cough.

He was diagnosed with influenza A and pneumonia, and he was in a critical condition and on a ventilator yesterday, noting that he had previously received the seasonal flu vaccine, according to the statement.

With flu cases on the rise, the bureau continues to emphasise the importance of vaccination and preventive measures to mitigate the impact of this seasonal illness, the statement said, stressing that residents are encouraged to stay vigilant and seek medical attention for any concerning symptoms. ■

## IAM vows to tackle rodent infestations

Ginnie Liang

After the recent closure of three branches of a local supermarket chain and a local eatery due to serious mouse infestations, the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) said in a statement yesterday that it have been taken various measures to eliminate rodents, restrict their movement, and cut off food supplies for them, further reinforcing its approach of prioritising prevention over extermination.

Restaurants often store excessive clutter and food supplies, which can provide ideal hiding spots and food sources for rodents, the statement said. To address the issue, the bureau has partnered with the public Macau Productivity and Technology Transfer Centre (CPTTM) to deliver comprehensive training that includes theoretical knowledge and practical site assessments at various locations, including private properties and dining establishments, the statement noted.

The bureau is also rolling out training programmes targeting key sectors such as property management,



This handout photo provided by the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) yesterday shows its staff members baiting a public street for rodent control.

sanitation, and the food industry, with 70 industry professionals having completed training courses on the subject and received certificates for successfully passing their knowledge assessment, the statement said.

In addition to training, the bureau is intensifying its efforts in public areas by conducting regular rodent control operations, which focus on

critical locations such as flowerbeds, green belts, and drainage systems, the statement said.

Approximately 1,400 fixed rodent bait boxes have been installed on public streets, with dedicated personnel checking and replenishing bait weekly to effectively manage the rodent population, the statement noted. ■

## Macau logs this year's 1<sup>st</sup> imported malaria case

Ginnie Liang

Macau has recorded this year's first imported case of malaria, the Health Bureau (SSM) announced in a statement yesterday.

According to the statement, the patient is a 49-year-old non-resident worker (NRW) who had returned to Macau from Africa three months ago. He came down with chills, frequent urination and tea-coloured urine on Wednesday, after which he sought treatment at the private Kiang Wu Hospital.

According to the statement, a blood test showed that the patient has been infected with the ring form of Plasmodium falciparum, the early stage of Plasmodium parasite that causes malaria in humans, because of which he was diagnosed with malaria.

The man was in a "fair" condition at the time of last night's statement.

The statement underlined that the Macau Health Bureau has classified the man's case as an imported case of malaria after considering his travel history and the time of the onset of his symptoms, as well as its laboratory test results.

Malaria is a serious and sometimes fatal communicable disease caused by a group of malaria parasites, scientifically known as Plasmodium, the statement noted.

Malaria is transmitted to humans through the bites of infected female Anopheles mosquitoes, and while it cannot be spread directly between people, it can be transmitted through contaminated blood, organ transplants, shared needles, or from mother to child during pregnancy or childbirth, the statement said.

The statement also noted that the incubation period for different malaria parasites varies, typically ranging from 7 to 30 days after a mosquito bite, but in some cases, it can extend for months. Symptoms include intermittent fever, chills, sweating, headaches, fatigue, and muscle pain, with severe complications potentially leading to anaemia, organ failure, seizures, confusion, and death if not treated promptly. ■

## The Macallan celebrates 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary, launches 3 limited releases

Rui Pastorin

A night of celebration, food pairings and performances took place on Wednesday at CHINA ROUGE at Galaxy Macau in Cotai as single malt scotch whisky maker The Macallan celebrated its 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary, along with the launch of three limited single malt releases.

The event was themed a journey through time and saw the unveiling of The Macallan TIME: SPACE Mastery, The Macallan Harmony Collection Vibrant Oak and The Macallan A Night on

Earth in Jerez de la Frontera, each of which respectively featured accompanying performances.

A statement provided after the event noted that The Macallan TIME: SPACE Mastery is part of TIME: SPACE COLLECTION and depicts "nature's protection of its future, while also representing time travel with the past and future combined". The statement said that it "features layers of complexity that embrace 200 years of history" and is housed in a circular vessel representing "the circle of life

and the ongoing journey from the past to the future", presented in a vibrant red case featuring 200 spikes created through techniques stemming from origami.

The statement added that The Macallan Harmony Collect Vibrant Oak, the fourth edition in the series, reflects the brand's "expertise and mastery of wood" and was designed in collaboration with Cirque du Soleil. The statement said that it was matured in first fill American oak sherry seasoned casks and refill sherry casks to "deliver the classic American oak flavours of vanilla, citrus and sweet oak, naturally derived from the cask during maturation, with a medium, sweet finish that delicately lingers", while oak chippings were repurposed and used in the box and bottle labels.

Lastly, A Night on Earth in Jerez de la Frontera honours the Spanish region where The Macallan's cask journey began and features artwork by Jerez native María Melero. The statement said it was matured in a blend of European and American oak casks, alongside rare Pedro Ximenez-seasoned casks. ■



This photo provided by The Macallan shows an acrobatic performance taking place during Wednesday's media launch event and celebration at CHINA ROUGE at Galaxy Macau in Cotai.



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# Sam says Xia' remarks about Xi's speeches in Macau provide 'crucial guidance'

*Continued from p.1*

Sam also said that Xia's important speech delivered yesterday elucidated five key aspects of President Xi Jinping's series of important speeches. They were: 1. the spirit and rich connotations of the judgement that "One Country, Two Systems" is a good system; 2. the contemporary and global significance of peace, inclusiveness, openness, and sharing values, inherent in "One Country, Two Systems"; 3. the "Four Principles" identified by President Xi for the advancement of the practice of "One Country, Two Systems" in

a stable and far-reaching manner, addressing scientifically the theoretical and practical issues of "One Country, Two Systems"; 4. the provision of directions and guidance for the development of the Guangdong-Macau In-depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin and for the construction of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area (GBA); and 5. the outline of the profound connotations of the vital mission of the practice of "One Country, Two Systems" in the new era, as proposed by President Xi.

Sam pledged that the sixth-term MSAR

government will unite and lead all sectors of Macau in this new phase, to implement earnestly the spirit of President Xi's important speeches. The government was committed to comprehensively advancing the practice of "One Country, Two Systems" with Macau characteristics, striving for new achievements in this regard, according to the statement.

Sam also said that the MSAR government would always maintain its confidence in the theory and institutional framework of the "One Country, Two Systems" principle, adding that the government will remain committed to

promoting "the Macau story" in line with the great "One Country, Two Systems" principle, giving better play to the city's exemplary role in this regard.

The statement also quoted Sam as saying that the government would spare no effort in advancing the MSAR's various endeavours, apart from making full use of Macau's unique status and advantages, so that it could play a greater role in fulfilling the significant mission it shoulders in the course of building China as a great country and in the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. ■



## Local artist Xiao Xin hopes to raise funds for animal protection groups

**Rui Pastorin**

Pastels of cats and dogs are covering the walls of the Creative Macau gallery in Nape for local artist Susanne Leong Kin In's, aka Xiao Xin, latest exhibition "Love and Healing", which kicked off yesterday.

An artist who finds a sense of love and healing in being with dogs and while painting, Leong told the *Post* that she wants to use her abilities and what she loves to do to raise more funds towards animal charity.

During yesterday's opening ceremony for her exhibition, staff members of the gallery noted that Leong grew up wanting to help strays and has been painting animals

for charity since 2019, having already finished around 135 works. She has helped raise over 120,000 patacas to date.

Aside from protecting animals, the artist noted to the *Post* that she hopes to create different channels to raise more donations and funding to support associations that help stray animals, emphasising that these groups do not have many resources. "I hope all stray animals will be able to have a home", Leong pointed out.

Regarding the paintings on display, Leong highlighted two core sets of works during her remarks. One is a group of pastels where Leong creatively depicts cats saving or helping the world in certain scenarios,

i.e., warning against excessive phone use and reminding them to exercise, being good partners in people's lives. The other set of works sees the artist convey the idea of home through new and different techniques.

### Love and healing

Moreover, while introducing her works, the artist shared a cherished moment that took place early on in her art journey, which was when she volunteered to paint a picture of a friend's dog that had passed away.

Once completed, her friend thanked her for once again bringing her beloved pet back to life through her painting as well as for easing some of her pain about the dog's

passing. Leong further elaborated on the moment in a recent statement by the gallery, where she added: "I was overwhelmed by her emotions and this gave a new meaning to my animal paintings, which is also the strength that keeps me going". The statement quoted her as saying she hoped to enable everyone viewing her works to feel love and healing.

The free-admission gallery is located on the ground floor of the Macau Cultural Centre (CCM). The exhibition runs until February 5, and those interested may visit it from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. from Mondays to Saturdays. It is closed on Sundays and public holidays.



# Director Xia delivers remarks about President Xi's speeches on Dec 20 in Macao

On the morning of January 9, the National Association for Hong Kong and Macao Studies (NAHKMS) held a special seminar in Beijing on "Studying and Implementing the Spirit of President Xi Jinping's Important Speeches at the Meeting Celebrating the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Macao's Return to the Motherland and the Inauguration Ceremony of the Sixth Government of the Macao Special Administrative Region" in Macao on December 20, 2024.

Xia Baolong, director of the Hong Kong and Macao Work Office (HKMWO) of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office (HKMAO) of the State Council, attended the seminar and delivered a speech.

Xia said that President Xi Jinping's attendance at the celebration of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Macao's return to the motherland and the inauguration ceremony of the sixth government of the Macao Special Administrative Region (MSAR), as well as his inspection of the MSAR, has greatly enhanced the confidence of Hong Kong, Macao and the international community in the institutional advantages and development prospects of "One Country, Two Systems". It has greatly inspired the new MSAR government to open up new horizons for development and continuously create new glories, and has greatly inspired all sectors of Hong Kong and Macao society to promote better development in Hong Kong and Macao and make greater contributions to the construction of a strong country and national rejuvenation.

President Xi Jinping delivered an important speech, highly affirming the successful practice of "One Country, Two Systems" with Macao characteristics, profoundly summarizing the practical experience of "One Country, Two Systems", scientifically drawing up the blueprint for the development of "One Country, Two Systems", and solemnly declaring to the world the comprehensive, accurate and unswerving implementation of "One Country, Two Systems". "The firm stance of the policy provides a guide for the future development of Hong Kong and Macao, and provides a fundamental guideline and action guide for doing a good job in Hong Kong and Macao work in the current and future period. It is of great milestone significance in the development of "One Country, Two Systems".

Xia said that President Xi's important speech looked back at the tremendous changes in Macao and used the brilliant achievements made in the practice of "One Country, Two Systems" to eloquently prove to the world that the good system of "One Country, Two Systems" has strong vitality. President Xi stressed that "the brilliant achievements made by Macao since its return to the motherland have proved to the world that 'One Country, Two Systems' has significant institutional advantages and strong vitality. It is a good system to maintain the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong and Macao, and it is a good system to serve the great cause of building a strong country and national rejuvenation."

## 'A good system to be upheld for a long time'

A good system is one that enables peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation among different social systems and must be upheld for a long time." We must deeply understand its spiritual essence and rich connotations. This good system is good because it conforms to the fundamental interests of Hong Kong and Macao and is wholeheartedly supported by the residents of Hong Kong and Macao.

It conforms to the fundamental interests of the country and the nation and is strongly supported by more than 1.4 billion people of the motherland. It conforms to the interests of investors from all countries and is supported by the international community.

Xia Baolong said that President Xi's important speech was based on the broad context of time and space, and clearly put forward the value concepts of peace, inclusiveness, openness and sharing embodied in the "One Country, Two Systems", which greatly demonstrated the contemporary and global significance of the "One Country, Two Systems". President Xi pointed out that "the values of peace, inclusiveness, openness and sharing embodied in 'One Country, Two Systems' belong to China and the world, and are worthy of joint protection." This important statement profoundly reveals the contemporary and global significance of "One Country, Two Systems", provides Chinese wisdom and solutions for promoting global governance, further demonstrates the appeal of "One Country, Two Systems", and is a major contribution to human political civilization.

## 'Embracing all rivers'

"Peace" means valuing peace, coexisting in harmony, and resolving disputes and differences through consultation and dialogue. This is the inherent meaning of "One Country, Two Systems". "Inclusiveness" means embracing all rivers and being tolerant, and fully respecting institutional differences and diverse characteristics. This is an inevitable requirement of "One Country, Two Systems".

"Openness" means embracing the world, moving forward hand in hand, and constantly injecting new vitality into economic and social development. This is a distinctive feature of "One Country, Two Systems".

"Sharing" means win-win cooperation, mutual benefit and reciprocity, and the sharing of institutional dividends and development achievements. This is the result of the practice of "One Country, Two Systems".

## The 'four principles' must be grasped

Xia also said that President Xi's important speech connects the past, present and future, profoundly reveals the practical laws of "One Country, Two Systems", and opens up a new realm of "One Country, Two Systems" theory in the new era. President Xi's important speech, based on the practical experience of Hong Kong and Macao since their return to the motherland, succinctly summarized the four principles that must be grasped to continue to promote the steady and long-term practice of "One Country, Two Systems", and scientifically answered major theoretical and practical issues of "One Country, Two Systems". These important statements further enrich and develop the "One Country, Two Systems" theory and elevate the understanding and grasp of the practical laws of "One Country, Two Systems" to a new historical height.

## 'Organically unified'

"Adhere to the basis of 'one country' and make good use of the advantages of 'Two Systems'" is the correct direction that must be firmly grasped to promote the practice of "One Country, Two Systems". "One Country" and "Two Systems" are organically unified. "One Country" is the root and basis of "Two Systems", and "Two Systems" make "One Country" richer and more exciting. "Maintaining high-level security and promoting high-quality development" are two major tasks that must be coordinated

to advance the practice of "One Country, Two Systems." Combining safety, the top priority, with development, the first priority, is very realistic and targeted. We must be unwavering in maintaining security and unwavering in focusing on development; both are indispensable. "Give full play to unique advantages and strengthen internal and external connections" is the functional role that must be consolidated and enhanced to advance the practice of "One Country, Two Systems". Hong Kong and Macao must ensure both internal and external connections, maximize the benefits of the "One Country, Two Systems" system, polish the international brands of Hong Kong and Macao, and demonstrate greater achievements on the international stage. "Promoting core values and promoting inclusiveness and harmony" is the political and social foundation that must be continuously consolidated to advance the practice of "One Country, Two Systems." In the practice of "One Country, Two Systems", we must promote the core values of loving the country and Hong Kong, loving the country and loving Macao, and at the same time, seek common ground while reserving differences, enhance exchanges and integration of diverse cultures, unite all forces that can be united, and form a broader unified support for "One Country, Two Systems" at home and abroad.

Xia also said that President Xi's important speech provided guidance for the development of the Guangdong-Macao In-depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, had important guiding significance for the construction of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA), and would surely continue to enrich the new practice of the development of the "One Country, Two Systems" cause. In his important speech, President Xi specifically reiterated the original intention of developing Hengqin, emphasizing that "the central government decided to develop Hengqin with the aim of promoting the appropriately diversified economic development of Macao and facilitating the lives and employment of Macao residents. This positioning must be grasped well, and we must not develop anything inconsistent with this positioning.

We must deeply understand the important statement about the "three things to look at" (namely, the effectiveness of the development and construction of the in-depth cooperation zone should be tested by whether there are concrete measures and results in promoting the appropriate diversification of Macao's economy and facilitating the lives and employment of Macao residents; it depends on whether new institutional achievements have been made in leveraging the advantages of the "Two Systems" and promoting the connection of rules and mechanisms between the two places; it depends on whether the construction of market integration in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area has been promoted through the integration of Hengqin and Macao, and we need to see whether the integration of Hengqin and Macao has played a pioneering role in promoting the market integration of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and also has grasped the positioning and role of Hong Kong and Macao in the construction of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area). We must deeply understand the important discourse on resolutely carrying out reforms and focusing on tackling tough problems, and push Hong Kong and Macao to make greater contributions in the construction of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. We must deeply understand the important discourse on maintaining strategic

determination and persisting in long-term efforts, and support Hong Kong and Macao in participating in the construction of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area with more pragmatic measures.

Xia also said that President Xi's important speech clearly put forward the important mission of practicing "One Country, Two Systems" in the new era, and earnestly expressed the hope that the SAR government would seize the opportunity, forge ahead with reforms, and take responsibility, which would play a strong role in continuously creating a new situation of high-quality development of the "One Country, Two Systems" cause.

In his important speech, President Xi Jinping clearly pointed out that "achieving better development of Hong Kong and Macao and making greater contributions to building a strong country and national rejuvenation is an important mission in the practice of 'One Country, Two Systems' in the new era." This important statement marks the contemporary coordinates of the practice of "One Country, Two Systems" on the historical scroll of comprehensively advancing the building of a strong country and the great cause of national rejuvenation through Chinese-style modernization, and is full of earnest expectations for Hong Kong and Macao.

## Xi's 'three expectations' and 'four hopes'

President Xi put forward "three expectations" and "four hopes" for the MSAR government and all sectors of society. These important instructions also apply to Hong Kong. We hope that the governments of the Hong Kong and Macao SARs and all sectors of society will bear in mind the instructions, follow the trend of the times, take the initiative to identify, respond to and seek changes, better leverage the institutional advantages of "One Country, Two Systems", strengthen mutual learning, exchanges and cooperation between Hong Kong and Macao, and constantly open up Hong Kong and Macao. Macao is developing new horizons. We must facilitate the important discourse on promoting the economic development of Hong Kong and Macao, and focus on the economy, development and construction; we must facilitate the important discourse on improving the governance efficiency of the MSAR, and make great efforts to build an efficient and effective service.

We must facilitate the important discourse on building a higher level of opening-up platform and continuously strengthen the international advantages and characteristics of Hong Kong and Macao; we must facilitate the important discourse on maintaining social harmony and stability and unite and gather all sectors of society. We will use our strength to build a better Hong Kong and Macao.

Xia finally said that President Xi's affectionate exhortations will surely motivate and inspire all Hong Kong and Macao residents to forge ahead with determination and work hard, and will inject strong impetus for Hong Kong and Macao to fly higher, go further and achieve better development. With the strong support of the great motherland, the united efforts of the SAR governments and all sectors of society, and riding on the mighty east wind of building a strong country and national rejuvenation, Hong Kong and Macao will surely create new glories and write new legends.

*The translation of the Chinese statement provided by the HKMWO and HKMAO has been arranged and edited by The Macau Post Daily. The heading and subheadings have been added by the Post. ■*

## UM forecasts Macau's 2025 GDP growth of 7.7 pct

Tony Wong

The University of Macau (UM) announced yesterday that its researchers forecast that Macau's gross domestic product (GDP) will grow 7.7 percent in 2025 considering that this year's global economic outlook will face the risk of being affected by a downward trend due to the ongoing slowdown in the Chinese mainland's economic growth as well as the uncertainty brought about by the possible major changes in various countries' economic policies.

The public university announced the 2025 economic forecast in a statement yesterday. The university's annual forecast for Macau's economy is carried out by a research team consisting of economists from its Department of Economics. The GDP forecast project is administered by the university's Centre for Macau Studies (CMS).

The statement noted that after Macau enjoyed a strong recovery in the number of visitor arrivals in the first quarter of 2024 when it recorded a large year-on-year growth of 79.4 percent, the second quarter's recovery slowed down when the number only increased 17.1 percent year-on-year. Afterwards, the statement noted, the year-on-year growth in the number of visitor arrivals in the third quarter continued to slow down to just 11.1 percent.

The statement underlined that due to the slowdown in the year-on-year growth in the number of visitor arrivals, Macau's exports of services in the third quarter of 2024 only increased by 1.3 percent year-on-year in real terms to 72 billion patacas (2022 price level), in which visitors' gaming expenditure rose by 11.2 percent year-on-year in real terms to 42.9 billion patacas, but visitors' non-gaming expenditure dropped by 14.5 percent year-on-year in real terms to 20.1 billion patacas.

The UM statement pointed out that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) forecast in October last year that the global economy is expected to grow 3.2 percent in both 2024 and 2025, indicating that the global economic growth is expected to remain stable.

However, the statement said that with the uncertainty brought about by the possible major changes in various countries' economic policies, the 2025 global economic outlook will face a risk of being affected by a downward trend. The statement noted that the US economy is expected to grow 2.8 percent in 2024 and 2.2 percent in 2025, while the euro area's GDP is expected to rise 0.8 percent in 2024 and 1.2 percent in 2025.

The statement also said that affected by the negative impact of its structural change and the weak expectation of its economic growth

prospects, the Chinese mainland's economic growth has slowed down, with its GDP year-on-year growth of just 4.6 percent in the third quarter of 2024.

According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), the Chinese mainland's GDP grew 5.3 percent, 4.7 percent and 4.6 percent year-on-year in real terms in the first, second and third quarters of 2024. In the first three quarters, the mainland's GDP grew 4.8 percent year-on-year in real terms.

The statement said that the Chinese mainland's economic growth prospects would possibly face greater uncertainty this year due to the possibly increasing trade frictions between China and the US.

The statement acknowledged the central government's ongoing efforts to boost private consumption and investment by implementing stronger fiscal and monetary policies.

The statement also noted that the current global political and economic landscape has also slowed down the economic growth of Hong Kong, another major services export market for Macau.

The statement underlined that Macau's 2025 economic growth prospects are subject to various "unstable" factors, both domestically and internationally, because of which the research team forecasts that Macau's GDP will grow 7.7 percent this year. ■

## Sam stresses Xi's instructions for enhancing Guangdong-Macau cooperation



Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai (left) shakes hands with Guangdong Governor Wang Weizhong on the sidelines of yesterday's 2025 Guangdong-Macau Cooperation Joint Conference in Guangzhou. — Photo: GCS

Tony Wong

The 2025 Guangdong-Macau Cooperation Joint Conference was held in Guangzhou yesterday where both sides affirmed that thanks to the joint efforts of the two governments, significant phased achievements have been made in the development of the Guangdong-Macau In-depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin while the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area (GBA) is being steadily advanced, according to a statement by the Macau Government Information Bureau (GCS) last night.

Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai travelled to Guangzhou yesterday to attend the one-day meeting, which was co-chaired by Sam and Guangdong Governor Wang Weizhong.

During the meeting, according to the statement, Sam raised two points concerning his understanding of the various speeches made by President Xi Jinping during his visit to Macau last month.

Sam said the first point is that Guangdong-Macau cooperation has, over the 25 years since Macau's return to the motherland, significantly contributed to the successful implementation of the "One Country, Two Systems" principle in Macau.

According to the statement, Sam said that Guangdong has provided substantial support and assistance to Macau in areas such as ensuring the supply of food, water and electricity to the city. Guangdong has also helped Macau with the enhanced convenience of customs clearance procedures, the promotion of cross-border trade settlement in yuan, and the strengthened industrial integration, enabling Macau to push

ahead with its appropriate economic diversification drive, Sam said, adding that Macau's development is inseparable from the close care and guidance shown to the city by the central government, as well as the strong support from the mainland's various provinces and cities, particularly Guangdong Province.

According to the statement, Sam said that the second point is about the need to study and implement Xi's series of important speeches concerning enhancing Guangdong-Macau cooperation. The spirit of Xi's series of important speeches has established a new orientation and beacon for Guangdong and Macau, Sam said, adding that building upon available foundations of cooperation, the two sides should strive to elevate to a new level of pragmatic cooperation in multiple fields, jointly making greater contributions to building China into a stronger country and achieving the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

According to the statement, Wang said during the meeting that Xi paid inspection visits to Macau, Guangdong, and the in-depth cooperation zone in Hengqin around the time of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Macau's return to the motherland — a significant time in history — and delivered a series of important speeches, paving the way for a new high-quality development phase of the "One Country, Two Systems" principle. Xi also provided a clear direction for supporting Macau's integration into the nation's overall development and outlined the blueprint for greater cooperation between Guangdong and Macau, Wang noted. ■

## 17 restaurants recognised in Black Pearl Restaurant Guide

Rui Pastorin

Meituan's Black Pearl Restaurant Guide 2025 recently honoured 17 of Macau's restaurants, the same number as last year.

The guide was released by the mainland's e-commerce platform Meituan, with the restaurants, except for one, all located within the city's integrated resorts. SJM Resorts and parent company STDM collectively earned the most with seven diamonds in Macau, followed by Melco Resorts & Entertainment, which earned six.

SJM Resorts said in a statement earlier this week that Robuchon au Dôme at Grand Lisboa maintained its three-diamond rating, which is the highest distinction, for the seventh consecutive year, while

The Eight received a two-diamond rating for the fourth year straight.

Grand Lisboa Palace's (GLP) Palace Garden marked its debut on the guide with a one-diamond rating, while Hotel Lisboa Macau's Guincho a Galera retained one-diamond for the second consecutive year.

Moreover, Melco Resorts & Entertainment noted in their statement that Jade Dragon at City of Dreams (COD) marked its sixth consecutive year of receiving the three-diamond award, while Yi at the property's Morpheus received a one-diamond rating for the sixth year. Moreover, Alain Ducasse at Morpheus received one diamond for the second year, and Sushi Kinetsu at City of Dreams' Nūwa

was earned one diamond for the second consecutive year.

Integrated resort operator MGM noted in their statement earlier this week that its signature restaurants Imperial Court and Five Foot Road were each again crowned with one-diamond awards.

Meanwhile, multiple media outlets said that Galaxy Entertainment Group's (GEG) Feng Wei Ju and 8½ Otto e Mezzo BOMBANA, Wynn Palace's SW Steakhouse and Chef Tam's seasons, have each garnered one diamond. Sands China's La Chine and Zi Yat Heen were also each again recognised with one diamond. The only listing not in an integrated resort is the original outlet of Hip Seng Seafood Hot Pot Restaurant in Macau, according to the reports. ■

## STOCK MARKETS

### Hang Seng Index closes 0.2 pct lower

HONG KONG — Hong Kong stock market ended lower yesterday with the benchmark Hang Seng Index down 0.2 percent to close at 19,240.89 points.

The Hang Seng China Enterprises Index fell 0.17 percent to end at 6,978.97 points, while the Hang Seng Tech Index rose 0.1 percent to end at 4,311.54 points. — Xinhua

## Macau's bus passengers rise 6 pct in 2024

Tony Wong

The Transport Bureau (DSAT) announced yesterday that Macau recorded almost 230 million public bus passengers in 2024, or a daily average of over 620,000, an increase of around six percent from 2023.

The bureau announced the data in a statement on its WeChat account yesterday.

According to DSAT data on

its website, the city recorded 214 million public bus passengers in 2023, or a daily average of 586,900.

According to calculations based on the 2023 daily average of 586,900 public bus passengers and on yesterday's announcements, Macau's 2024 average daily number of public bus passengers stood at around 622,000, almost close to the 627,200 recorded in 2019, the

highest on record.

However, Macau recorded its highest single-day number of public bus passengers in 2024, yesterday's statement pointed out.

According to DSAT data on its website, Macau recorded about 801,000 and 803,000 public bus passengers on October 3 and 4 last year, the highest single-day number on record. ■